

VZCZCXYZ0020  
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBU #1300/01 3342039  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O R 302038Z NOV 09  
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0111  
INFO RHMCSUU/CDR USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 001300

SIPDIS  
STATE FOR INR/R/MR, I/GWHA, WHA, WHA/PDA, WHA/BSC, WHA/EPSC  
CDR USSOCOM FOR J-2 IAD/LAMA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: WEEK OF NOVEMBER 24-30; 11/30/09; BUENOS AIRES

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: WEEK OF NOVEMBER 24-30; 11/30/09; BUENOS AIRES

## 11. SUMMARY STATEMENT

The most important international stories were related to: the outcome of the Honduran presidential election; expectations for the Copenhagen Climate Change Summit; and implications of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's visit to Brazil and Bolivia.

## 12. HONDURAS

- "A triumph for the most conservative Republicans"

Ana Baron, leading circulation "Clarín's" Washington-based correspondent, writes (11/30), "When President Barack Obama announced that he would acknowledge the outcome of the Honduran elections, he jeopardized all the expectations generated in the region when he took office. The prevailing optimism at the Summit of the Americas held in Trinidad and Tobago in April has fainted away. There is big skepticism. There is talk of a new 'pre-emptive-blow' US doctrine. Why? What happened?"

"In the harsh confrontation created by the Honduran coup d'etat between the official party and the opposition in Washington, the most conservative sector of the Republican opposition won. They energetically and consistently work from the very beginning in favor of the coup.

"The highest point of the confrontation was when Republican Senator Jim de Mint blocked the confirmation of the nomination of two candidates of Obama to become Assistant Secretary for Western Hemispheric Affairs and US Ambassador to Brazil (Arturo Valenzuela and Tom Shannon respectively). De Mint only lifted the blockade of said nominations after the State Department committed to officially acknowledge the Honduran elections.

"In fact, many observers, whether Americans or Latin-Americans, perceive what happened in Honduras as a return to the past in which the US acted according to its own interests. Even if Zelaya is

restored after the elections, the damage has already been made. The OAS is divided and multilateralism in the region is dying. Obviously enough, the newly elected Assistant Secretary for Western Hemispheric Affairs Arturo Valenzuela will attempt to revive hope, but his task will not be easy."

- "Pull ahead that someone will push you"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" carries an opinion piece by international editor Jorge Elias, who writes (11/29), "... Brazil got involved in the Middle East conflict, which is of most interest to the US. Obama does not appreciate the gesture or does not perceive the cost. Lula supposes his US counterpart will act in reciprocity... He makes patent the points of disagreement: he feels 'slightly disappointed' with Obama. Brazil's abstention at the IAEA (International Agency on Atomic Energy) Board of Governors' condemnation of Iran is another sign of the malaise, just like Lula's decision (which is shared with several countries) not to acknowledge the outcome of Honduran elections. The US wants to begin from scratch with a new president. Another sign of the malaise is the mere enumeration of Brazil's points of disagreement with the USG on sensitive areas such as sending military to Colombia, climate change and the Doha Round trade liberalization.

"Actually, both Lula and Obama respect dialogue and, just like

Bush, they act in a pre-emptive way: Lula does it with Iran not to repeat the mistaken blockade against Cuba. Obama does it with Honduras not to repeat the mistaken wink to autocrats who end up being intolerable. No matter how hard one pulls ahead, one will always have to use the rear mirror to look behind."

### 13. UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE - COPENHAGEN

- "Obama will attend the Climate Change conference with a plan to lower pollution"

Ana Baron, from leading "Clarín," writes (11/26), "On the eve of Thanksgiving Day, President Barack Obama pledged a provisional target of reducing greenhouse gases about 17 percent (of 2005 levels) by 2020 to 83% before 2050.

"Truly enough, Obama does not know whether he will be able to meet his goal and this is why he will attend the Copenhagen Climate Change Summit and not its closing, which is when a final communique will be negotiated. However, the sole gesture of facilitating the establishment of a climate change international treaty is already a 180-degree turn regarding Bush's policy.

"Obama's goal of reducing GHG emissions by 17% by 2020 is far less ambitious than that of the EU (20-25%) or Japan (25%). Nevertheless, Obama's maneuvering margin is not too big. Until now, the US Congress has never managed to pass a law setting forth concrete climate change goals."

### 14. AHMADINEJAD TO BRAZIL, BOLIVIA AND VENEZUELA

- "Israel does not hide its disapproval"

Sergio Dattilo, on special assignment in Jerusalem for business-financial "Ambito Financiero," writes (11/24), "Alex Ben Tzvi, Israel's FM Director for Latin America, voices the Israeli concern over the visit of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to Brazil and his meeting with Brazilian President Lula da Silva: 'We are not trying to choose anybody's friends but whoever decides to receive Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Latin America should recall who this character is and what his regime did in the region. We are concerned over Iran's increasing presence in Latin America, particularly what it could do.'

"Ben Tzvi adds that 'Ahmadinejad's visit is a symptom of a process that has developed for years in the hemisphere. And when we are asked what is bad about it, we recall that it is the Argentine Judiciary itself which held Iran liable for the 1992 and 1994 attacks.'

"Actually, not only did it raise concern in the Israeli Foreign Minister but all Israeli mass media have echoed the Iranian President's trip to Brazil."

- "Evo and Ahmadinejad confirm strategic partnership"

Pablo Stefanoni, on special assignment for leading "Clarín" in La Paz, writes (11/25), "After having obtained Brazil's support for peaceful nuclear development, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad made a stop in Bolivia on his trip to Caracas. Evo Morales's gestures of support and affection for the controversial leader were abundant.

"... Yesterday, in the framework of strengthening bi-national partnership between Iran and Bolivia, (Ahmadinejad) got interested in Bolivia's gigantic reserves of lithium, which are used to manufacture rechargeable batteries for computers, cell phones and cameras. Iran will cooperate with the Scientific Committee for the industrialization of lithium, which is located in the Uyuni salt deposit. The Uyuni salt deposit concentrates 50% of world reserves and it has already captured the attention of companies from France, Japan and South Korea (the largest purchaser of Bolivian mining exports). Iran's National Oil Company announced it would open its offices in Santa Cruz."

- "Mideast comes to LatAm"

James Neilson, international columnist of liberal, English-language "Buenos Aires Herald," writes (11/27), "Thanks to Venezuela's belligerent president Hugo Chavez, Iran's holy warriors are in a position to establish a bridgehead in the Western Hemisphere that in the by no means improbable event of a big war in the Middle East would be sure to attract the attention of the US. That presumably is one reason why the US military is so interested in having access to bases in next-door Colombia, and why Chavez sporadically speaks of going to war. There is also the suspicion that the Brazilian governments' chumminess towards Iran could lead to the proliferation of jihadi cells in Latin America's biggest country.

"Argentina's leaders, still traumatized by the humiliating economic collapse of 2001 and 2002, have done their best to curry favor with Chavez and have resigned themselves to playing second fiddle to

Brazil. But apart from her traditional sparring partner Great Britain, Iran is the only country Argentina is seriously at odds with.

"If the Middle Eastern cauldron reaches boiling point, as it well could in the near future, Latin American countries will have to decide what they should best do. Like Venezuela's Chavez, Brazil's current leaders apparently imagine that it is in their interest to cuddle to Iran and treat her as a misunderstood victim of North American prejudice. Having been at the receiving end of the Islamic Republic's aggressive world agenda, Argentina cannot be expected to share their attitude so, hard as the Kirchners may try to stay close to Chavez and Lula, she may soon feel obliged to break with them and go her own way."

To see more Buenos Aires reporting, visit our  
classified website at:

<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/wha/buenosaires>

MARTINEZ  
MARTINEZ